

Assessment of Research Quality
Utrecht institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS)
Faculty of Arts and the Humanities / Arts
Utrecht University
1997 - 2004

October 2005

Title:

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Faculty of Arts and the Humanities / Arts
Utrecht University
1997 - 2004

Board of Utrecht University

Site visit June 2005
Report October 2005

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1 General information

1.1 The Dutch national system for assessing the quality of research

In the last few years, the Dutch system for assessing the quality of research has been changed substantially. Instead of a system of national, external assessments co-ordinated by the office of the Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU), now the executive boards of the universities themselves determine the design and organisation of their research qualifications.

The starting point for this evaluation of the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS) is the 'Standard Evaluation Protocol 2003-2009' (SEP), officially approved by the VSNU, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), as well as the Dutch Ministry of Education and Science.

The international review committee appointed by the Board of Utrecht University reports in the present document about its findings. The SEP requires the committee members to evaluate the research institute as a whole and the research programmes of the institute individually, on four main assessment criteria, namely:

- quality (international recognition and innovative potential);
- productivity (scientific output);
- relevance (scientific and socio-economic impact);
- vitality and feasibility (flexibility, management, and leadership).

The committee presents its assessment on these four criteria according to a five-point scale. The scores used within the assessment are *excellent* (5), *very good* (4), *good* (3), *satisfactory* (2) and *unsatisfactory* (1). A detailed description of the criteria and the five-point scale can be found in Appendix A.

1.2 The evaluation protocol

The protocol describes in detail how the review committee needed to be composed, the way the Research Institute had to prepare a self-evaluation report, and the points the committee had to consider in its assessment. An outline of the protocol is included in Appendix B. The protocol also lists the seven programs of the Research Institute to be assessed:

1. Computational Linguistics & Logic
2. Development of Language Systems
3. Experimental Psycholinguistics
4. Language Use
5. Phonetics
6. Morphology & Phonology
7. Syntax & Semantics

1.3 The review committee

The University Board has appointed Professor Neil Smith as the chairman of the committee. In consultation with the chairman the other members of the committee were selected. The committee consisted of:

- Gennaro CHIERCHIA, Professore Ordinario di Glottologia e Linguistica, University of Milan-Bicocca, and Professor of Linguistics, Harvard University;
- Tony SANFORD, Professor of Psychology, Glasgow University;
- Neil SMITH (Chair), Professor of Linguistics, University College London;

- Sarah THOMASON, William J. Gedney Collegiate Professor of Linguistics, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

More detailed information about the committee members can be found in Appendix D. Dr Mark Kas (NWO Physical Sciences Council) acted as Secretary.

1.4 The input for the assessment process

The evaluation was carried out on the basis of:

- The ‘Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS) Evaluation 1997-2004’, a 222 pages document describing the research conducted at UiL OTS between 1997 and 2004. It reports the institute’s mission, describes the research programmes, gives an overview of input in terms of research time and money, an overview of scientific output in different forms, an analysis of the institute’s impact both in and outside scientific circles and, finally, its plans for the future. The report contains two main parts. The first part comprises information on research at the aggregation level of the institute; in the second part the individual research programmes are described in detail.
- A representative sample of publications and PhD theses.
- A site visit which took place on 12th – 15th June 2005, in which the committee interacted with all the relevant personnel. During this visit the committee met with 15 groups of three to four UiL OTS researchers each, including a mix of faculty, PhD students and post-docs. The committee also spoke with the Rector, the Dean and members of the Advisory Board. Furthermore, the committee had a separate meeting with the Research Institute’s postdocs and PhD-students. Full details of the site visit programme are provided in Appendix C.

In addition, the committee also had sight of the report of the LOT review committee (chaired by Professor Botha; August 2004), the report of the midterm review committee (chaired by Professor Partee; July 2003) and the associated external experts’ reports on the individual theme groups.

The documentation and site visit were meticulously prepared by Dr Annelies de Jeu (UU Faculty Officer), Mrs. Rianne Giethoorn (Head of Secretariat UiL OTS) and Mrs. Larissa Berghoef (Secretariat Faculty office). The committee wishes to express thanks and appreciation to them for their magnificent job.

2 Assessment of the Utrecht institute of Linguistics OTS (UIL OTS)

Director: Professor Martin Everaert (previously: Professor Eric Reuland)

Mission

The self-evaluation was marked by clarity and honesty, suggesting that those responsible for the future of the Institute are anxious to benefit from any new insights the assessment might provide. The mission statement was admirably clear and concise, with an explicit and desirable emphasis on “the cognitive faculties underlying the structure and use of human language”. This approach is embodied in seven ‘theme groups’, each of which we evaluate separately below. We share the view that this orientation is intellectually appropriate and administratively coherent, and suggest below how we feel it should be built on in the next review period. These suggestions will also include possible ways of restructuring the current division into theme groups.

Leadership

Our impression of the Institute as a whole is overwhelmingly favourable. The leadership has been systematically exemplary, first under the direction of Professor Eric Reuland, latterly under the direction of Professor Martin Everaert. There is no doubt that their inspiration has been the direct cause of the Institute’s international visibility, academic influence, and intellectual success. The Director is advised by a Research Committee consisting of the various theme group leaders. This structure seems to work well: we heard no complaints. The role of the (external) Advisory Board is less obvious to us. We were treated by them with great courtesy but came away with little feel for the effectiveness of their contribution. We would also comment on one other development – the balance between male and female members of the Institute at various grades. We are persuaded that, in the period under review, the Institute has made notable progress in improving the gender distribution and that it needs to persevere with an equalisation strategy, especially at the highest level. We appreciate that in a situation of minimal growth this is exceedingly difficult to achieve.

Resources and facilities

The resources enjoyed by the Institute, as provided by the University, seem to us to be adequate, but not overly generous. We were agreeably impressed by the fact that the Director has considerable discretion in the virement of money between different heads, and by the fact that special provision is made for LOT. It is vital that both these arrangements continue. The other strands of funding – from NWO and other external bodies seem to work well, and in fact operate to the advantage of the Institute because of its high profile: witness, the success in attracting Veni, Vidi, Vici money.

The facilities are likewise adequate, and the proposed co-location of the various groups in new premises should improve the situation. We are anxious to see the continuation of the sensible policy of giving extra funds for successful theses that depend on a technical infrastructure, as the various laboratories (phonetics, eye-tracking, baby-lab) are successful and increasingly important components of the Institute.

Productivity

The productivity of the Institute as a whole is excellent, although there is some variation between the groups in the generally high standard with respect to the quantity and quality of the academic publications.

Relevance

The societal relevance of scientific institutes like UiL OTS can be looked at from a number of angles. The aim of the Institute is to do linguistic research of the highest quality. Direct impact of the results of such research on society is generally limited. Nevertheless, the committee saw some excellent examples of UiL OTS research which could have an effect on the wider community, for instance the research on document design in the Language Use group, matters regarding pronunciation in the Morphology and Phonology group, and the work on dyslexia in the Experimental Psycholinguistics group.

Other angles to look at impact on society are the level of contributions to neighbouring sciences and the education of highly qualified new researchers. With respect to the first, the committee has observed with pleasure the contacts of the Computational Linguistics & Logic group with Artificial Intelligence in the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences. Other contacts exist as well and form a basis for further strengthening, as will be elaborated in section 4.

With respect to the second the Institute does an excellent job with an outstanding PhD programme which attracts talent from all over the world. In this connection the committee is impressed by UiL OTS's score within NWO's national and highly competitive ***Research Incentives Scheme*** 'Veni, Vidi, Vici'. It is striking that the Institute currently has three Veni post-docs and one Vici programme. The committee wishes to emphasize this as it is a tribute to UiL OTS that Veni recipients choose to hold their awards here. As one of them put it: "Utrecht is the only place where it is possible" (to carry out adequately the research being undertaken). The committee judged the presentations made by the Veni trio to be among the highlights of its visit. On the excellence of the Vici programme under Professor Kager the committee will comment in section 3.2.

LOT Research School and graduate programme

As stated above, one of the most impressive achievements of the Institute is its role, nationally and internationally, in postgraduate education.

LOT

Utrecht serves as the administrative centre and guiding force behind LOT (Landelijke Onderzoekschool Taalwetenschap, the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics). The current and previous directors of LOT (Professor Martin Everaert and Professor Eric Reuland) are also the current and previous directors of the Institute. UiL OTS is pre-eminent in the organisation of LOT, especially the Summer and Winter Schools that provide outstanding facilities for education in linguistics throughout Europe and beyond. We cannot do better in this respect than cite the remark in Professor Rudie Botha's ***Report on a Peer Review of LOT*** (August 2004) that "As a graduate school, LOT clearly has a unique position in both Dutch and European linguistics".

The PhD Programme

LOT with its various component parts is a crucial component in the training of graduate students from Utrecht and elsewhere, but it is probably fair to say that UiL OTS is the heart – or perhaps 'nerve-centre' would be a better metaphor. In terms of financial support, breadth of coverage, personal guidance and sheer vibrancy UiL OTS is the best in Europe, and the International programme in particular is the envy of Universities elsewhere. Other places may have a comparable range of expertise – London in the UK, Potsdam, Stuttgart and Tübingen in Germany, for instance – but it is nowhere integrated with the success it is in Utrecht. It was gratifying to note that the students seem generally appreciative of what is provided. Our interaction with them yielded only minimal signs of any kind of dissatisfaction, a situation due no doubt to the existence of a dedicated Graduate Program Supervisor in the form of Dr Maaike Schoorlemmer (previously: Dr Jan Don).

The committee would also make mention of the research masters degree in Linguistics, which seems to be flourishing.

Overall conclusion

It is important to emphasize that the Institute as a whole is markedly greater than the sum of its parts. Nonetheless some of these parts are necessarily better than others. There are three main areas of strength: Development of Language Systems, Experimental Psycholinguistics, and Syntax & Semantics. Two groups are good without reaching the outstanding level of success of these three: Computational Linguistics & Logic, and Morphology & Phonology. A third group, Language Use, produces comparably good work but suffers from a lack of integration; and one group, Phonetics, seems to us to be no longer viable. We elaborate on these summary views immediately.

Overall assessment of the Institute

Quality	5
Productivity	5
Relevance	4
Vitality	5

3 Assessment of the research programmes

The following sections give an evaluation of each of the theme groups, elaborating on the summary assessment given above. Appendix E provides a table with the input of research time at programme level in the period under review.

3.1 Computational Linguistics & Logic

Group leader: Professor Michael Moortgat

The work produced by this group is technically extremely competent, focussing on the use of linear logic, in the specific guise of Categorical Grammar, and on resource sensitive grammatical deduction to develop computational models relevant to the characterisation of the cognitive abilities underlying knowledge and use of language. The group is very small and there is some doubt about its long-term viability. It was formerly affiliated with the national research school in Logic, and it still has better interaction with Artificial Intelligence (outside the Faculty) than with other groups within the Institute with which it might be expected to have more in common. In particular, there seemed to be minimal collaboration with the Syntax & Semantics group, despite obvious overlap in the research interests of the respective members. We were generally impressed by the quality and quantity of the work produced, though the results were largely confined to a specific line of computational linguistics. The impact on other areas of computational linguistics (e.g. approaches to the lexicon) and on linguistic semantics or syntax appear to be rather limited. Generally speaking, the tendency is to follow current developments (e.g. on negative polarity or on questions) trying to re-couch them in Moortgat's formalism. What comes out of this is a precise tool for doing taxonomic work.

Quality	4
Productivity	4
Relevance	3
Vitality	3

In spite of the good quality and productivity of this group, the relevance of its work to other groups does not manifest itself clearly. As a consequence, the group's long-term viability is moot. An obvious development would be to merge this group with Syntax & Semantics. This would at once reduce the complexity of the thematic group structure and, hopefully, foment greater collaboration.

3.2 Development of Language Systems

Group leader: Dr René Kager (previously: Professors Aafke Hulk and Wolfgang Herrlitz)

This is an outstanding group producing internationally prominent work on first and second language acquisition, and meritorious work on language teaching and learning under the direction of Professor Wolfgang Herrlitz. Much of the success of the group is to be attributed to the dynamic leadership of successive leaders, most recently Dr Kager, and to their ability to attract external funding (e.g. the 'Segmentation' Vici project, funded by NWO), but the group as a whole is excellent. We would particularly wish to emphasize the publication record of this theme group: their books and articles are numerous in quantity and appear in leading international journals and with leading publishers.

Quality	5
Productivity	5

Relevance 5
Vitality 5

3.3 Experimental Psycholinguistics

Group leader: Dr Sergey Avrutin (previously: Dr Frank Wijnen)

This is another outstanding theme group with internationally renowned work in comparative psycholinguistics, dyslexia, and sentence processing. The group's original inspiration came from Dr Wijnen, the value of whose continued participation was appropriately commented on by members of several other groups. His innovative work has been built upon with commendable insight and initiative by Dr Avrutin, resulting in the current vibrant group. We would like to emphasize that the work on dyslexia is particularly relevant to social and educational policy in the wider community.

Quality 5
Productivity 5
Relevance 5
Vitality 5

With the growing importance of neuro-imaging and EEG data in psycholinguistics, the experience of Professor Wijnen and his contacts with psychology offer a good starting point for exploiting such techniques. Importantly, both Professor Wijnen and Professor Avrutin indicated to us that they plan work in this direction. Given the potential value of such methods in Language Acquisition, the opportunity for cross-group collaboration would be facilitated by any move towards the development of neuro-linguistics as indicated further below.

3.4 Language Use

Group leaders: Professors Ted Sanders & Paul van den Hoven (previously: Professor van den Hoven)

This group produces valuable work across a wide range from stylistic analysis to text design and translation studies. The relevance of this work beyond the Institute is considerable, but we were worried that the various components of the research done in this group were not internally integrated, and that there was too little interaction with the other theme groups in the Institute – perhaps a reflection of their separate history. Indeed, we detected a certain amount of tension between this and the other groups and a feeling within the group that their work was not appreciated.

We found it difficult to see the connections between the theoretical work carried out by members of the group and the text design it was claimed to lead to. For instance, the notion of 'complexity' appealed to in the work on stylistic structure was ill-defined. More problematically, it appeared to us that the ethos of this group was somewhat different from that of the rest of the Institute. This became clear, for instance, in the absence from their program of any course in basic theoretical linguistics of the kind characteristic of all the other groups. We find this unfortunate: without a common basis at the foundations, it is difficult to build solid common research. We are not suggesting that accommodation should be unidirectional. The rapid changes that this group has undergone give rise to opportunities for making their research relevant to the other groups – to the benefit of everyone. We would also like to put on record that we welcome the plans for a "Centre for Discourse" that should facilitate the kind of closer integration we recommend. It is also highly significant that this group seems to be the only one in which cooperation between senior faculty, post-docs and graduate students is fully successful. We heard students from other groups refer with

envy to the Language Use habit of having regular ‘vertically integrated’ seminars. It might well be that this is something the other groups (or their revised replacements) should emulate. The group is of great importance because of its work on discourse and, in Prof. Sanders, it has a researcher with a good track record, who successfully combines psycholinguistic approaches with more purely linguistic ones. However, this work is not fully integrated with the other work on discourse carried out by a variety of researchers elsewhere in the Institute. Similarly, the idea of providing theoretically-motivated guidelines for document design is in principle a good one, in part because it increases the chances of external funding opportunities, but we did not see evidence at this stage that this goal was being realised.

Quality	4
Productivity	4
Relevance	3
Vitality	4

The relevance score would be higher if more solid theoretical contributions were made to a theory of discourse processing. There is perhaps a danger of the group members being spread too thinly over a number of subprojects.

3.5 Phonetics

Group leader: Dr Hugo Quené (previously: Professor Sieb Nootboom)

This group has produced a reasonable amount of good work but, with the retirement of Professor Nootboom, our considered judgement is that it is no longer viable as an autonomous unit. This view is reinforced by the fact that the group now has only one post-doc and one PhD student, both of whom will end in 2006, and there seems to be little prospect of attracting more students. We wish to emphasize most strongly that we view the continued presence of Phonetics within the Institute as essential. There was more than one occasion on which we observed a certain naiveté in experimental design, and phoneticians are the most obvious of the experimental linguists who could make a useful corrective contribution. For example, in one case we were told that the stimuli used in variational experiments had been “carefully pronounced”, rather than synthesized or otherwise adequately controlled. Further, to ensure the continued catholic coverage of linguistics in its most important manifestations necessitates the continued presence of Phonetics in the Institute in some form. This does not, however, have to be as a theme group, and we recommend that Phonetics be absorbed into the Morphology and Phonology group or, alternatively, into the Experimental Psycholinguistics group. The alternative possibility of allocating Phonetics to some other institution in the Netherlands might be considered, but it appears that Utrecht is not unique in having problems in this area. Moreover, this would deprive Utrecht of the continued presence of practising phoneticians whose presence, as we have emphasized above, is important.

Quality	3
Productivity	3
Relevance	3
Vitality	2

3.6 Morphology & Phonology

Group leader: Professor Wim Zonneveld

This is another very good group, and one whose coverage could be enhanced by the incorporation of Phonetics. The team has high visibility and produces work of social as well as academic relevance. It has an excellent output in Phonology, though its recent work in Morphology has been

somewhat disappointing. It is also worth mentioning that Professor Zonneveld's own work, especially the investigation of metrics, forms a satisfying bridge to English literary studies. There are potential problems of viability, as the group is small and has too few post-docs. It may be that the group would benefit not only from absorbing Phonetics, but from the kind of restructuring suggested below.

Quality	4
Productivity	4
Relevance	3
Vitality	3

3.7 Syntax & Semantics

Group leader: Professor Norbert Corver (previously: Dr Denis Delfitto)

As is clear from the foregoing, the Institute has a large number of first-rate teams working in various areas of linguistics, but this is the jewel in the crown. Any centre that includes all of Everaert, Reinhart and Reuland is *ipso facto* going to be internationally excellent. Having said that, it is also worth mentioning that even this group could advantageously display more interaction among its component parts: the relations between the syntacticians and the semanticists seem to be somewhat less than is desirable. We would also like to put on record that, although we were given no presentation on the subject, the Typology and SynCom initiatives are models of their kind.

Quality	5
Productivity	5
Relevance	5
Vitality	5

We anticipate that the "New areas of research" proposed in the self-evaluation, especially the development of work in Microvariation and Macrovariation, will enhance the importance and visibility of this theme group.

4 Conclusion - Whither UiL OTS?

As should be abundantly clear from the foregoing, our findings are mainly positive. In this final section we make a number of suggestions for the future of UiL OTS.

1 Position of Phonetics

We propose that the Phonetics group be abolished and the subject included (perhaps) within Morphology & Phonology. In fact, it may be desirable to restructure the organisation of the Institute more radically. We understand from informal remarks by Professor Everaert that this issue has been on the agenda for some time, and has recently been discussed in the research committee. More specifically, we are in sympathy with the implicit suggestion (p.8 of the 'Self-evaluation') that the 'three different dimensions' of the study of language should be the underpinning for any restructuring. The 'demise' of Phonetics should then be seen as an opportunity to make progress in this direction. In any case we reiterate that the subject of phonetics must remain as part of the Institute's provision.

2 Collaboration with cognitive sciences

One such opportunity would be to diversify the Institute's interests in the direction of neuro-linguistics. The avowedly 'cognitive' stance of UiL OTS lends itself naturally to such development. We are aware that the financial implications of such a change of direction are considerable, but this seems not to be an insuperable obstacle and we believe that research in language and the brain will play an increasingly important role in future theoretical linguistics. There are already moves in this direction, especially in the collaboration with medics for cochlear implant research, and we would encourage this further. A related observation is that the laboratory-based nature of much of the linguistics carried out in the Institute would be enhanced by a move towards the inclusion of imaging studies. It is relevant at this juncture to say that we were favourably impressed by the eye-tracking experiments being carried out. In this context we would make two further points: first we wish to commend, and urge the continuation of, Utrecht's systematic attempt to link work in all of Aphasia, Dyslexia, First Language Acquisition, and Second Language Acquisition directly to linguistic theorizing; second, we wish to commend the suggestions for "New areas of research" in the 'Self-Evaluation'.

3 Integration of the Language Use group

We recommend that the Language Use group be more tightly integrated into the activities of the rest of the Institute. Progress in this direction should be helped by the proposed co-location of the various theme groups in new premises, but special efforts are likely to be needed to promote integration. If the restructuring hinted at above is carried out, a possible new grouping could be as follows, with the Language Use group being shared between the second and third new super-groups:

- i. Knowledge of Language
- ii. Language Acquisition and Language Pathology
- iii. Use of Language

No grouping is ideal and we are aware that this one would not necessarily facilitate the desirable collaboration between Language Use and those working on acquisition. However, it would mean that Computational Linguistics & Logic could merge with either (i) or (iii), that Phonetics could merge into (i), and so on. One implication might be that the membership of Syntax & Semantics would split among all three new groups, but we encourage the Director to experiment with various possibilities. It is worth noting in this respect that Professor Avrutin has plans for experimental work

in Phonetics; that Professor Corver's work involves the phonetics and phonology of intonation; and that everyone seems to be interested in acquisition. A further desideratum is that collaboration with members of the Psychology department be fostered even more than at present. We also wish to stress the development of discourse processing as a priority for Language Use, and note that interdisciplinary support from the formalists in other groups would facilitate a greater theoretical development in this group.

4 Institute-wide seminars

We think that it would be desirable to have Institute-wide seminars. Whether the weeks and months have enough hours to make this feasible is not apodeictic. We also think it would be desirable to have a more structured programme for students who plan to do experimental research, especially with regard to courses on experimental methodology and statistics. This could be effected along the lines of the proposed activity under EMLAR (Experimental Methods in Language Acquisition Research) planned for November.

5 Influence of undergraduate teaching

Although the discussion of undergraduate teaching is beyond our remit, its influence on research, and on the everyday running of the Institute is so pervasive that we cannot ignore it entirely. It seems to us that the extent to which research is driven by requirements of teaching is unfortunate and has a deleterious effect on the research ethos.

Concluding remark

We would like to finish on a positive note. As is reflected in the score we have given for the 'overall assessment', UiL OTS is quite simply *excellent*. It is also worth making explicit that the score is not an average of the group ratings but reflects our unanimous estimate of the international visibility, prestige and influence of the Institute as a whole. We all feel privileged to have been involved in the evaluation.

Appendices

Appendix A

Assessment criteria and rating

The committee acted upon the description of the protocol (Appendix B), concerning the interpretation of the four main assessment criteria:

Quality is to be seen as a measure of excellence and excitement. It refers to the eminence of a group's research activities, its abilities to perform at the highest level and its achievements in the international scientific community. It rests on the proficiency and rigour of research concepts and conduct; it shows in the success of the group at the forefront of scientific development. As a rule, experts in the field - the peers - judge this. They rely on their own knowledge and expertise, on discussions with the group leaders and other members, and on various kinds of systematic information. When an institute provides high quality state of the art facilities to the research community this can be considered as a measure of excellence.

Productivity refers to the total output of the group; that is, the variegated ways in which results of research and knowledge development are publicised. Usually, quantitative indicators measure this. In most cases this will be bibliometrics, which are indicators concerned with publications and citations of publications. The output needs to be reviewed in relation to the input in terms of human resources.

Relevance is a criterion that covers both the scientific and the technical and socio-economic impact of the work. Here in particular research choices are assessed in relation to developments in the international scientific community or, in the case of technical and socio-economic impact, in relation to important developments or questions in society at large.

Vitality and feasibility refers to the internal and external dynamics of the group in relation to the choices made and the success rate of projects. On the one hand, this criterion measures the flexibility of a group, which appears in its ability to close research lines that have no future and to initiate new venture projects. On the other hand, it measures the capacity of the management to run projects in a professional way. Assessment of policy decisions is at stake, as well as assessment of project management, including cost-benefit analysis.

The review committee presents its assessment on quality, productivity, relevance and vitality according to a five-point scale, specified in the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP):

Excellent = 5

Work that is at the forefront internationally, and which most likely will have an important and substantial impact in the field. Institute is considered an international leader.

Very good = 4

Work that is internationally competitive and is expected to make a significant contribution; nationally speaking at the forefront in the field. Institute is considered international player, national leader.

Good = 3

Work that competitive at the national level and will probably make a valuable contribution in the international field. Institute is considered internationally visible and a national player.

Satisfactory = 2

Work that is solid but not exciting, will add to our understanding and is in principle worthy of support. It is considered of less priority than work in the above categories. Institute is nationally visible.

Unsatisfactory = 1

Work that is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc. Work not worthy of pursuing.

Appendix B

Outline of the evaluation protocol for the review of the Utrecht institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS)

Period under review 1997 – 2004

1 Introduction

This evaluation protocol is an elaboration of the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2003–2009 for public research organisations in The Netherlands. The SEP stipulates the requirements for research assessments of institutes of the Dutch universities and of the NWO and KNAW as agreed by governing boards of the association of universities VSNU and of the NWO and KNAW. For items not covered in this protocol the provisions of the SEP apply.

The Governing Board of Utrecht University is responsible for the present evaluation. It appoints the chair and members of the committee. It determines the protocol for the evaluation. It is responsible for the publication of the report of the committee and for the conclusions to be drawn from it.

2 Units to be assessed

This research assessment concerns the Utrecht institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS) and its seven research programmes:

1. Computational Linguistics and Logic
2. Development of Language Systems
3. Experimental Psycholinguistics
4. Language Use
5. Morphology and Phonology
6. Phonetics
7. Syntax and Semantics

3 External Evaluation Committee: profile and expertise

The assessment will be performed by an independent international external evaluation committee. The committee maximally has four members, including the chair. In selecting its members the following selection criteria should be taken into account:

- a committee member is a recognized authority in one or more of the linguistic disciplines described in the research programme of the institute;
- the combined expertise of the selected committee members should reflect the diversity of linguistic disciplines studied within the institute and cover these areas as much as possible. The expertise of the committee members should, thus, not be substantially overlapping (although some overlap is unavoidable).

The chair is an internationally recognized authority in linguistics - if possible in one of the research areas that are pursued in Utrecht - and, preferably has:

- administrative experience within a university-based research institute or department covering a diversity of disciplines comparable to that of UiL OTS;
- knowledge of academia in Europe (i.e. understands how graduate training is done, how linguistics and language departments are positioned in European universities, how universities and faculties of arts and humanities are generally run).

4 Assignment

To assess against international scientific standards the quality, productivity, relevance and viability of the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS), its research and its graduate programmes, in the period 1997 up to and including 2004, on the basis of the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP).

The committee is asked to formulate its assessment in a report, which is to be made public by the Board of Utrecht University, specifying:

1. A review of the entire institute, containing:
 - A reflection on the leadership, strategy and policy of the Institute;
 - An assessment of the quality of the resources, funding policies and facilities;
 - An assessment of the academic reputation of the Institute;
 - An assessment of the social relevance of the Institute;
 - A reflection on the strengths and weaknesses the Institute has formulated in the self assessment;
 - An assessment of the graduate programme the institute offers, as part of the national research schools with which the institute is affiliated.

2. A review of each programme of the institute containing:
 - A quantified assessment of the quality, productivity, relevance and prospects of the research programme (according to a five-point scale specified in appendix 2 of the SEP);
 - A justification of this quantified assessment, containing:
 - A reflection on the leadership, strategy and policy of the research programme;
 - An assessment of the quality of the research staff, (human) resources, funding policies and strategies;
 - An assessment of the quality and quantity of the publications;
 - An assessment of the academic reputation of the programme;
 - An assessment of the relevance of the programme from an academic perspective and from a broader social perspective.

In preparing the report the following questions are to be taken into consideration:

- What are the quality and relevance of the institute (scientific and socio-economic impact)?
- What is the quality of the leadership, management, strategy and research programmes of the institute, its (human) resources, organization and infrastructure, and how can they be improved?
- To what extent has the Institute/research programme achieved its mission?
- What are the opportunities and obstacles for the future development of the institute, given the constraints a faculty institute has to deal with?

Management letter

The chair of the Evaluation Committee will consult the Faculty Board and the director of the Institute whether certain information is to be treated confidentially. The confidential information will not be incorporated in the report, but will be sent to the University Board in a management letter.

Site visit

The Evaluation Committee will pay a 3-day visit to the Institute. The director of the Institute will send a proposal for a programme of the site visit to the secretary of the Evaluation Committee, who will discuss it with the chair. The chair decides on the definitive programme. The Evaluation Committee will receive all relevant material (self-evaluation document, this protocol and the

visiting programme) at least four weeks in advance of their site visit. The key publications and theses the Evaluation Committee would like to read will be sent earlier, in accordance with the time table. The time table also specifies at what stage the chairman may ask, possibly after consulting the other committee members, for additional information from the Institute or the Board.

At the beginning of the visit (a representative of) the University Board will install and brief the Committee in the presence of the leadership of the faculty. Subsequently, the committee will meet with (a representative of) the University Board. Thereafter the committee decides on their working procedure for the visit and for writing the draft report.

During the visit, the Committee meets with:

- the Director of the Institute;
- the Dean of the Faculty and the member of the Faculty Board responsible for this evaluation;
- the programme leaders of the Institute;
- the director of the Institute will ensure that any (group of) person(s) wanting to be heard by the Evaluation Committee will get an opportunity to express its opinions, in one form or another.

During the site visit, the Evaluation Committee will have access to the Midterm Review drawn up by an international panel in the Summer of 2003.

At the end of the visit the committee will meet with the University Board to present a first, oral, report. After the visit the committee will draw up a report. In order to avoid any factual errors or mistakes, the chair asks the director of the Institute to comment on the draft evaluation report. After having received these comments, the Committee concludes its evaluation by formulating the evaluation report and the management letter and by presenting it to the University Board. The University Board will publish the report. It will discuss the report and the management letter with the dean of the Faculty and the director of the Institute and the consequences to be drawn from them.

Information

The Institute provides a self-evaluation document according to the format specified in Annex 1, based on the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP, <http://www.qanu.nl/comasy/uploadedfiles/sep2003-2009.pdf>). The University Board, ultimately responsible for both the Institute and for the evaluation, approves the document as an input document for the evaluation.

Appendix C

Schedule site visit UiL OTS

June 13 – June 15 2005

The committee:

- Prof.dr. N.V. Smith (Chair), Professor of Linguistics, University College London
- Prof.dr. G. Chierchia, Professore Ordinario di Glottologia e Linguistica, University of Milan-Bicocca, and Professor of Linguistics, Harvard University
- Prof.dr. A.J. Sanford, Professor of Psychology, Glasgow University
- Prof.dr. S.G. Thomason, William J. Gedney Collegiate Professor of Linguistics, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor
- Dr. M. Kas, NWO Physical Sciences Council, secretary

Sunday June 12

19.00-22.00

Informal dinner

Monday June 13

09.00-09.45

Installation of the committee by the Board of the University.

Prof.dr. W.H. Gispen, Rector

Drs. E. Bringmann, University Strategic Programme

Also present:

Prof.dr. J.W. Bertens, Dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Prof.dr. P.H.A. Coopmans, Vice dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Drs. M. Angenent MPA, Faculty director

Prof.dr. M.B.H. Everaert, director UiL OTS

09.45-10.30

Meeting of the committee with Faculty Board.

Prof.dr. J.W. Bertens, Dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Prof.dr. P.H.A. Coopmans, Vice dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Drs. M. Angenent MPA, Faculty director

10.30-12.30

Meeting with Research Committee and management staff: general questions about the self-assessments of the institute as a whole, and self-assessments of the individual groups.

UiL OTS Research Committee

Prof.dr. M.J. Moortgat, Computational Linguistics & Logic

Dr. R.W.J. Kager, Development of Language Systems

Dr. S. Avrutin, Experimental Psycholinguistics

Prof.dr. T.J.M. Sanders, Language Use

Dr. H. Quéne, Phonetics

Prof.dr. W. Zonneveld, Morphology & Phonology

Prof.dr. N.F.M. Corver, Syntax & Semantics

UiL OTS management

Prof.dr. M.B.H. Everaert, director UiL OTS

Dr. M.L. Schoorlemmer, Graduate Program Supervisor LOT

12.30-13.30: Lunch

13.30-18.30

Meetings (30-45 minutes) with project leaders and the staff and PhD students they work with: brief presentations of the projects followed by discussion.

The committee met with:

- Avrutin, De Lange, Vasic: ***Comparative psycholinguistics***
- Corver, Koppen, Rigterink, Barbiers: ***Micro-variation***
- Quené, Heeren, Janse: ***Phonetics***
- Nilsen, Szendroi, Nouwen: ***Veni-projects***
- Kager: ***Phonotactics***
- Kager, Escudero, Brasileiro, Zonneveld: ***Phonological representation in L2 and Bilinguals***

17.15-18.30

Visit to the experimental facilities: eye-tracking lab, phonetics lab, acquisition lab.

19.00-22.00: Dinner

Tuesday June 14

09.15-12.30

Meetings (30-45 minutes) with project leaders and the staff and PhD students they work with: brief presentations of the projects followed by discussion.

The committee met with:

- Coopmans, Unsworth, Van Kampen, Philip: ***L1-Bilingualism***
- Sanders, Evers-Vermeul, Versteeg, Kamalski: ***Coherence in discourse and cognition***
- Zonneveld, vd Velde, Sebregts: ***Socio-geographic and linguistic variation in speech: the case of /r/ in The Netherlands and Flanders***
- Wijnen, Wilsenach, De Bree: ***Dyslexia***
- Reuland, Koornneef, Marelj, Wijnen: ***Interface (processing)***

12.30-14.00

Meeting (+ lunch) with the advisory board of UiL OTS

Advisory Board UiL OTS

Prof.dr. H.J. Bennis, Meertens Institute Amsterdam

Prof.dr. R.P.G. Collier, Technical University Eindhoven

Prof.dr. E. de Haan, Utrecht University

Prof.dr. A.G.B. ter Meulen, NWO and University of Groningen

Prof.dr. E.J. Reuland, former director UiL OTS

Drs. J. Smits, former NWO Humanities Council

Prof.dr. H.J. Verkuyl, emeritus professor Utrecht University

14.30-17.00

Meetings with project leaders and the staff and PhD students they work with: brief presentations of the projects followed by discussion.

The committee met with:

- Lentz, Elling, Holleman, Pandermaat: ***Document Design: Evaluating text quality***
- Herrlitz, vd Bergh, Jauregi Ondarra: ***Language teaching***
- Moortgat, Hendriks, Capelletti, Vermaat: ***The logic of variation***
- De Swart, Zwarts: ***Conflicts in interpretation***

18.00-19.00

Meeting with postdocs and PhD Students.

Committee, All PhD students and post-docs

19.00-21.00

Buffet/Informal meeting with post-docs, PhD students, promotores, research committee.

Wednesday June 15

09.30-11.00

Committee meeting about Draft Evaluation Report.

11.00-12.00

Consultation hour: opportunity for individual institute members to speak with the committee.

12.00 –13.30

First oral report of the committee about its findings and preliminary conclusions + lunch.

Committee, University Board, Faculty Board, management UiL OTS, chair of the advisory board, research committee

Appendix D

The review committee

Prof. Neil Smith (Chair), Professor of Linguistics, University College London
General linguistic theory, phonology, syntax, language acquisition, typology, the savant syndrome.

Prof. Gennaro Chierchia, Professore Ordinario di Glottologia e Linguistica, University of Milan-Bicocca, and Professor of Linguistics, Harvard University
Semantics and pragmatics, syntax-semantics interface, philosophy of language.

Prof. Tony Sanford, Professor of Psychology, Glasgow University
Cognitive psychology, language comprehension, interfaces of perception and language, psycholinguistics.

Prof. Sarah Thomason, William J. Gedney Collegiate Professor of Linguistics, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor
Historical linguistics, language contact, pidgins and creoles, typology, Slavic & Native American linguistics.

Appendix E

Research staff (in fte) at programme level UiL OTS 1997-2004

Based on Table 1 (p.15) of the Self-evaluation. Two apparent counting errors in the original table have been corrected (in italics in this Appendix).

	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Research staff at institutional level (fte research time)</i>									
<i>UiL OTS</i>									
Tenured staff	16,15	17,24	16,27	16,9	18,11	16,49	16,69	16,67	134,52
Non-tenured staff	6,74	8,27	9,33	11,32	13,57	14,93	11,76	8,16	84,08
PhD students	17,67	20,05	21,04	21,78	26,98	25,35	20,92	24,18	177,97
<i>Total research time</i>	<i>40,56</i>	<i>45,56</i>	<i>46,64</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>58,66</i>	<i>56,77</i>	<i>49,37</i>	<i>49,01</i>	<i>396,6</i>
Management staff*	2	2	1,5	2	2	2	1,8	1,8	15,1
Ext. Funding staff								1,3	1,3
<i>Research staff at program level (fte research time)</i>									
<i>Computational Linguistics & Logic</i>									
Tenured staff	1,06	1,49	1,2	1,2	1,22	1,3	1,27	1,2	9,94
Non-tenured staff	2,48	2,86	1,8	1,18	1,28	0,97	0,49	0,08	11,14
PhD students	3,19	3,23	4,08	3,78	3,83	1,94	1,19	1,31	22,55
<i>Research time</i>	<i>6,73</i>	<i>7,58</i>	<i>7,08</i>	<i>6,16</i>	<i>6,33</i>	<i>4,21</i>	<i>2,95</i>	<i>2,59</i>	<i>43,63</i>
<i>Development of Language Systems</i>									
Tenured staff	3,59	3,68	3,7	3,81	4,16	3,6	3,95	3,82	30,31
Non-tenured staff	0,71	1,62	3	4,56	4,64	2,11	2,09	1,73	20,46
PhD students	2,03	3,09	2,64	2,09	4,54	3,63	2,12	2,67	22,81
<i>Research time</i>	<i>6,33</i>	<i>8,39</i>	<i>9,34</i>	<i>10,46</i>	<i>13,34</i>	<i>9,34</i>	<i>8,16</i>	<i>8,22</i>	<i>73,58</i>
<i>Experimental Psycholinguistics</i>									
Tenured staff						1,1	1,25	1,43	3,78
Non-tenured staff						4,63	3,75	1,58	9,96
PhD students						1,8	2,93	4,16	8,89
<i>Research time</i>						<i>7,53</i>	<i>7,93</i>	<i>7,17</i>	<i>22,63</i>
<i>Language Use</i>									
Tenured staff	4,26	4,32	4,02	4,02	4,58	3,87	3,94	4,09	33,1
Non-tenured staff	1,79	1,66	1,45	1,22	1,46	1,58	0,58	0,33	10,07
PhD students	4,47	3,73	3,08	3,5	4,1	3,31	4,09	4,79	31,07
<i>Research time</i>	<i>10,52</i>	<i>9,71</i>	<i>8,55</i>	<i>8,74</i>	<i>10,14</i>	<i>8,76</i>	<i>8,61</i>	<i>9,21</i>	<i>74,24</i>
<i>Phonetics</i>									
Tenured staff	1,77	2,04	2,04	2,04	2,04	1,97	1,8	1,8	15,5
Non-tenured staff	0	0	0	0,52	0,9	0,61	0,9	0,9	3,83
PhD students	2,2	2,6	2,06	1,44	1,85	2,44	1,53	1,5	15,62
<i>Research time</i>	<i>3,97</i>	<i>4,64</i>	<i>4,1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4,79</i>	<i>5,02</i>	<i>4,23</i>	<i>4,2</i>	<i>34,95</i>

Morphology & Phonology

Tenured staff	1,36	1,25	0,85	1,45	1,5	1,15	1	1	9,56
Non-tenured staff	0,26	0	0	0	0	0,03	0,05	0,16	0,5
PhD students	2,03	2,05	1,93	2,22	3,25	4,14	3,01	4,03	22,66
Research time	3,65	3,3	2,78	3,67	4,75	5,32	4,06	5,19	32,72

Syntax & Semantics

Tenured staff	4,11	4,46	4,46	4,38	4,61	3,5	3,48	3,33	32,33
Non-tenured staff	1,5	2,13	3,08	3,84	5,29	5	3,9	3,38	28,12
PhD students	3,75	5,35	7,25	8,75	9,41	8,09	6,05	5,72	54,37
Research time	9,36	11,94	14,79	16,97	19,31	16,59	13,43	12,43	114,8

* *Scientific support staff is included under non-tenured staff of the relevant theme groups.*

Comment of the Board of the Faculty of Arts and the Humanities / Arts

***Faculty of Arts and the
Humanities***

Policy and Planning Department

Kromme Nieuwegracht 46, 3512 HJ Utrecht, The Netherlands

To the Rector of Utrecht University
Professor Willem Hendrik Gispen
Heidelberglaan 8
3584 CS Utrecht

Date

December 12, 2005

Subject

Assessment Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS)

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Page

Page 1 of 1

Dear Professor Gispen,

I welcome the opportunity offered by the University Board to respond to the recent assessment of the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS).

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude for the thorough review that the committee has produced and for the impressive amount of work that must have gone into this reviewing procedure. We are obviously very pleased with the committee's assessment of the research institute as a whole as "quite simply excellent", and with its observation that it functions as an organic unity that is markedly greater than the sum of its parts. We are proud of the committee's judgment that the PhD program of UiL OTS is the best of its kind in Europe and that its international program in particular is the envy of universities elsewhere.

We likewise appreciate the detailed comments on each of the institute's research programs. We would like to emphasize that we see the 'grades' assigned to the various criteria as evaluations of research groups in toto and absolutely not as evaluations of the work of individual researchers. We feel that with regard to these program evaluations the committee has succeeded very well in the difficult task of sharply differentiating between the various research programs where such a differentiation was indeed appropriate and possible - something we had specifically requested at the beginning of the site visit.

The result of this thorough and frank assessment is one in which an international committee of first-rate linguists regards three of the institute's programs - Development of Language Systems, Experimental Psycholinguistics, and Syntax & Semantics - as in all respects outstanding. Naturally, this evaluation is more than welcome, but it at the same time reminds us of the challenge UiL OTS is facing in consolidating its position as an internationally prominent player in this particular field. The points about the various programs raised by the committee and its recommendations provide valuable input for the present discussions about the future strategy of UiL OTS in conjunction with that of the Faculty of Arts and the Humanities.

In conclusion, we see the committee's report as a thorough assessment of the present quality and the long-term viability of the linguistics research carried out at Utrecht University. We will gladly take the opportunity to discuss the various thematic and strategic aspects of the report over the next few months, both within the Faculty and with our external partners, including the Board of Utrecht University.

Professor Hans Bertens
Dean